



# United States Mint Launches James Garfield Presidential \$1 Coin at Former President's Family Home

November 17, 2011

MENTOR, Ohio — Admirers of former U.S. President James Garfield gathered today for the United States Mint's official launch of the Presidential \$1 Coin struck in his honor. The ceremony was held at the James A. Garfield National Historic Site – location of the 20th President's family home – two days prior to the 180th anniversary of Garfield's birth.

"The Presidential \$1 Coin series connects Americans to inspiring life stories like President Garfield's," said United States Mint Acting Associate Director for Manufacturing Marc Landry. "He was the last President born in a log cabin, fatherless by the age of two, drove canal boat teams to earn money for college, became a classics professor and college president, rose to brigadier general in the Civil War, and enjoyed a long, distinguished career in the U.S. Congress."

In addition to Landry, speakers at the event included Rudolph Garfield, a great-grandson of President Garfield, and Dr. Allan Peskin, professor emeritus of history at the Cleveland State University. Peskin, who served as the event's keynote speaker, is the author of "Garfield," the definitive biography of James Garfield.

Those who attended the event were among the first in the Nation to get the new James Garfield Presidential \$1 Coin, which was released into circulation today. Following the ceremony, many of those in attendance exchanged their currency for 25-coin rolls of the new coin.

The James Garfield Presidential \$1 Coin is the 20th released in the United States Mint's Presidential \$1 Coin Program, authorized by the Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-145). The coin's obverse (heads side) bears a bold portrait of former President Garfield, designed and sculpted by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Phebe Hemphill, with the inscriptions *JAMES GARFIELD, IN GOD WE TRUST, 20TH PRESIDENT* and *1881*. The coin's reverse (tails side), by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Don Everhart, features a striking rendition of the iconic Statue of Liberty with the inscriptions *\$1* and *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*. The inscriptions *E PLURIBUS UNUM, 2011* and the mintmark ("P" or "D") are incused on the coin's edge.

James Garfield was born in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, in 1831. He later graduated from Williams College in Massachusetts and returned to the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (later Hiram College) in Ohio as a classics professor and then its president. He was elected to the Ohio state senate in 1859. In 1862, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served 18 years.

At the 1880 Republican convention, Garfield won the nomination for President on the 36th ballot. On July 2, 1881, just four months into his term, an embittered attorney who had unsuccessfully sought a consular post, shot the President in a Washington railroad station. He lay wounded in the White House for weeks. Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, tried in vain to find the bullet with an electrical device he had designed. On September 6, Garfield was taken to the New Jersey seaside and for a few days, he seemed to be recuperating. On September 19, 1881, however, he died from an infection and internal hemorrhage.

The United States Mint, created by Congress in 1792, is the Nation's sole manufacturer of legal tender coinage and is responsible for producing circulating coinage for the Nation to conduct its trade and commerce. The United States Mint also produces proof, uncirculated and commemorative coins; Congressional Gold Medals; and silver, gold and platinum bullion coins.

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